

Message Text

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INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SR-02 ORM-01 SCA-01 VO-03 FBIE-00 SY-04

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9528

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 0109

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, USSR, RP

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SOVIET DELEGATION

REF: MANILA 15153

BEGIN SUMMARY: A THREE-MAN SOVIET/PHILIPPINE FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY DELEGATION VISITED MANILA DECEMBER 24-31 AND RECEIVED GENERAL RED CARPET TREATMENT. DESPITE SEVERAL BAD MOMENTS DURING SCHEDULE, VISIT RESULTED IN ANTICIPATED RESULTS: HORTATORY RHETORIC, A NON GOVERNMENTAL CULTURAL AGREEMENT AND NO IMPACT ON TIMING FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. A THREE-MAN DELEGATION REPRESENTING THE SOVIET/PHILIPPINE FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY HEADED BY BORIS I. STUKALIN (CHAIRMAN, STATE COMMITTEE FOR PUBLISHING HOUSES, PRINTING PLANTS, AND BOOK TRADE) AND INCLUDING PHILOLOGIST AND TAGALOG LINGUIST, DR. IGOR PODVEREZNKY AND SOMETIME JOURNALIST AND LABOR SPECIALIST ALEXANDER MALOV, ARRIVED IN MANILA ON DECEMBER 23 FOR AN 8-DAY STAY.

2. THE VISIT WAS ESSENTIALLY A RETURN CALL FOR SECRETARY
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OF LABOR(AND CHAIRMAN OF THE PHILIPPINE/USSR FRIENDSHIP

SOCIETY) BLAS OPLE'S JUNE 1974 TRIP TO MOSCOW DURING WHICH THE PHILIPPINE AND SOVIET SOCIETIES WERE INAUGURATED.

3. THE CULTURAL MANDATE OF THE GROUPS NOTED IN JUNE IN MOSCOW WAS REEMPHASIZED IN MANILA ON DECEMBER 30 BY THE SIGNING OF A NON-GOVERNMENTAL CULTURAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIETIES FOR FRIENDSHIP AND CULTURAL RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES AND THE PHILIPPINES-USSR FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY. THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR THE STANDARD ENCOURAGEMENT OF EXCHANGES OF LECTURES, EXHIBITIONS, FILMS, SYMPOSIA, ETC. BY THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THE PROMOTION OF EXCHANGES OF STUDENTS, ATHLETES, ET AL.

4. THE DELEGATION WAS RECEIVED BY THE MARCOS' AT A MALACANANG DINNER, WAS FETED BY BLAS OPLE, BY SECRETARY OF TOURISM ASPIRAS AND BY ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE SECRETARY CARDENAS WHO, WITH ASPIRAS, CONDUCTED THE VISITORS ON A DECEMBER 26-29 TOUR OF NORTHERN LUZON.

5. THE STAY WAS A RATHER ROCKY ONE. SECRETARY OPLE MANAGED TO INSULT THE SOVIETS IN HIS SPEECH AT THE WELCOMING DINNER. HAVING DRUNK NOT WISELY BUT TOO WELL, OPLE MADE A JEERING TAGALOG REFERENCE TO THE RUSSIANS WHICH WAS APPARENTLY TRANSLATED CORRECTLY. IN ANY CASE, THE DELEGATION NEARLY PACKED ITS BAGS AND LEFT THE NEXT DAY. MELCHOR STEPPED IN, HOWEVER, AND SMOOTHED THE RUFFLED FEATHERS. OPLE'S GAFFE MAY EXPLAIN THE EXTRA REDCARPET TREATMENT SUBSEQUENTLY ACCORDED THE SOVIETS.

6. A SECOND INCIDENT OCCURRED DURING A FINAL PRESS INTERVIEW WHEN LUIS TARUC, AGING HUC LEADER, NOTICEABLY IRRITATED THE VISITORS BY DEMANDING WHETHER AN OUTSIDER COULD MEET WITH A GROUP OF SOVIET PEASANTS WITHOUT GOVERNMENT PERMISSION AS THEY HAD RECENTLY DONE IN THE PHILIPPINES AND DISPUTING STUKALIN'S AFFIRMATIVE REPLY. PRESS SECRETARY TATAD SPREAD OIL ON THE DIALECTICAL WATERS, HOWEVER, AND EVERYONE BREATHED A SIGH OF RELIEF WHEN THE DELEGATION WAS SAFELY ON THE PLANE.

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7. A THIRD POTENTIAL PROBLEM WAS AVOIDED WHEN THE GOP DOWNPLAYED THE PRESENCE OF A DESERTER FROM A SOVIET SHIP AND DID NOT REVEAL HIS REQUEST FOR ASYLUM (REFTEL).

8. COMMENT: DESPITE THE VARIOUS ROUGH SPOTS, THE SOVIET VISIT UNDOUBTEDLY ACCOMPLISHED ITS LIMITED OBJECTIVE OF MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM OF THE MOSCOW/MANILA RELATIONSHIP. SENIOR FILIPINOS HAVE ADMITTED TO EMBOFFS THAT THE

DELEGATION'S STAY WAS NOT EXPECTED TO PRODUCE ANYTHING
MORE THAN IT DID AND CERTAINLY WAS NOT EXPECTED TO HASTEN
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
TWO COUNTRIES. THE FILIPINOS FOUND STUKALIN AND
COMPANY VERY COLD AND HUMORLESS FISH AND THERE WAS GREAT
RELIEF WHEN THE DELEGATION LEFT.
SULLIVAN

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